American Behavioral Scientist
1–26
© 2015 SAGE Publications
Reprints and permissions:
sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav
DOI: 10.1177/0002764215588817
abs.sagepub.com
SAGE

Cerberus Unleashed: The Three Faces of the Lone Wolf Terrorist

Mark Pitcavage[1]

Abstract

The concept of the "lone wolf" terrorist slowly emerged in recent decades, often drawing media attention as a "new" or "dangerous" threat. It has only been in the past several years that the concept has begun to receive serious attention from scholars and experts, and no consensus has yet emerged on exactly what a lone wolf terrorist actually is. It is commonly believed that extremist or terrorist movements promote the notion of lone wolf violence because of the difficulties authorities have in detecting or preventing such acts, which gives lone wolves the chance to strike again. Many extremists do promote this sort of decentralized activity, but, as the example of the white supremacist movement shows, there are just as many extremists who oppose the use or promotion of lone wolf violence. An analysis of several dozen incidents of apparent lone wolf violence from the past two decades in the United States, incidents in which suspected lone wolves actually succeeded in killing at least one person, reveals some patterns and similarities among lone wolf offenders. These include, among others, the typical status of the offender on the periphery of the movement which they support, the tendency to use simple and easily acquirable weapons such as firearms, and the fact that most lone wolf offenders never succeed in launching a second act of violence.

Keywords

lone wolf terrorist, extremism, terrorism, leaderless resistance

> It's always the one we feared, the lone wolf that can come from nowhere and not be on our radar.
>
> —Former London Police Chief John Yates, following the murder of a British soldier on May 29, 2013, allegedly by Muslim extremists. (Thompson, 2013).

[1]Anti-Defamation League, New York, NY, USA

Corresponding Author:
Mark Pitcavage, Anti-Defamation League, 605 3rd Ave., New York, NY 10158, USA.
Email: mpitcavage@adl.org

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

In recent years, the concept of the "lone wolf" terrorist has emerged as a popular paradigm in the arena of extremist-related violence, typically portrayed as a "new" or "dangerous" threat. "The risk that we're especially concerned over right now is the lone wolf terrorist," President Barack Obama told a reporter in August 2011 (CNN, 2011), stating that his biggest concern was an attack like that carried out by Anders Behring Breivik in Norway in July 2011. "You know, when you've got one person who is deranged or driven by hateful ideology, they can do a lot of damage, and it's a lot harder to trace those lone wolf operators." A year later, Germany's interior minister, Hans-Peter Friedrich agreed, saying that "what worries us" is the threat of self-radicalized lone wolf attackers not directly connected to major terror groups (Associated Press, 2012).

The reason for this concern is clear: High-profile incidents, such as the Breivik attacks or the Fort Hood mass shooting in the United States in November 2009, have made abundantly obvious how much damage and mayhem a single person motivated by a cause and a desire to kill can commit. In the wake of such incidents, the "lone wolf" terrorist has become a frequent subject of conversation and speculation by the media, a subject of concern for law enforcement and government officials, and a recent subject for study and analysis by experts, both actual and self-appointed, in academia and elsewhere.

Yet for all this attention, the face of the lone wolf terrorist remains murky—more questions remained unanswered than answered and there is little consensus on many fundamental issues surrounding the lone wolf phenomenon. This article seeks to shed at least some light on the subject by examining the concept of the lone wolf in three different ways. First, it will briefly examine the concept of the lone wolf terrorist as described by outsiders—journalists, law enforcement and government officials, and academics. This will have the benefit primarily of making it clear how unshaped the lone wolf concept remains and providing guidance for further inquiry.

Second, this article explores a second face of the lone wolf phenomenon by examining how it is perceived not by outsiders but by members of an extremist movement associated with lone wolf activity: the white supremacist movement in the United States. Such an examination provides greater understanding of how extremists themselves understand the risks and rewards of lone wolf tactics and furthermore illustrates the lack of consensual acceptance of the validity or usefulness of the notion of lone wolf actions.

Last, this article examines a third face to the lone wolf phenomenon, the lone wolf concept in practice, by analyzing a pool of 35 lethal lone wolf perpetrators from domestic extremist movements in the United States from the past 20 years. Such analysis allows light to be shed on the accuracy of perceptions by outsiders and extremists.

The Lone Wolf as Perceived by Outsiders

As public consciousness of the lone wolf phenomenon has grown in recent years, there has been no end of speculation and discussion surrounding it (see Marlatt, 2012, for a recent bibliography). Yet, as we shall see, the lone wolf concept is still a very

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

malleable one, with only the beginnings of consensus on many issues surrounding the concept.

What Constitutes a "Lone Wolf"?

Perhaps the best way to illustrate the lack of consensus is to examine the phrase "lone wolf terrorist" itself. At its most basic, the phrase would seem to connote a person acting by him or herself who commits terrorist acts. Yet there is no agreement even on that much, as many people who describe the phenomenon do not limit the number of perpetrators to one. The main reason for this confusion seems to be another commonly accepted element of the definition of a lone wolf terrorist, one is not explicit in the term itself: lone wolf terrorists are widely defined as people not acting at the orders or directions of others, especially organized extremist or terrorist groups. Some students of lone wolf terrorism seem to prioritize this idea over the notion of a lone perpetrator.

Pantucci (2011), for example, in an analysis of "lone Islamist terrorists," claims that there are as many as four different types of "lone terrorists." First, he describes "The Loner," who is an individual who attempts to carry out a terrorist act without any actual connection or contact with other extremists except passive consumption from the Internet or elsewhere. Second, he suggests the "Lone Wolf," which is similar to his first category except that such people have "some level of contact" with "operational extremists," by which he seems to mean members of organized Islamic terrorist groups, especially online. His third category, however, is the incongruous "Lone Wolf Pack," which is "a small group of similarly minded individuals who choose to engage together in an act of terrorism." For Pantucci, it is their lack of contact with a group such as Al Qaeda that makes them somehow "lone wolves." His final category, "Lone Attackers," are simply single operatives of organized terrorist groups, which he admits does not fit in with the other three categories.

Similarly, Hewitt (2003) defines a "terrorist group" as consisting "of at least four individuals and to have carried out more than one attack," opening the field to lone wolves in groups of two or three. It is quite common among observers of the lone wolf phenomenon, academic or otherwise, to include Timothy McVeigh as an example, or even as the premier example, of a lone wolf, even though he accomplished the Oklahoma City bombing only with the considerable assistance of Terry Nichols, and lesser assistance from Michael and Lori Fortier. Likar (2011) claims that Timothy McVeigh was "the most successful lone wolf in U.S. history." Bates (2012) describes the "Oklahoma City bomber" as an example of a lone wolf terrorist, while Michael (2012) calls McVeigh one of "the most notorious lone wolves in the United States." Simon (2013) asserts that the Oklahoma City bombing was "the work of lone wolves, or at least individuals working with minimum assistance from others," and others have similarly identified McVeigh as a lone wolf (e.g., Simi, 2010; Turchie & Puckett, 2007). Even extremists have evinced similar opinions. White supremacist Alex Curtis, a major proponent of lone wolf terrorism in the late 1990s, argued in 1999 (and at other times) that, acting as a lone wolf, "McVeigh accomplished more than every racist group has since WW2." (Racial Reader Summary, 1999a).

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

In the end, though, such expansive definitions of lone wolf terrorism fail to satisfy. Spaaij (2010, 2012), rejecting such definitions, offers a more narrow and workable definition of lone wolf terrorism as acts carried out by lone individuals acting on their own and not as a member of a group or network or at the behest of some command or hierarchy. That is also the definition used in this article.

Another question raised about lone wolves is the degree to which they must be "alone" wolves; that is, how extensive can their connections to extremist movements be? Writer Amanda Robb (2010) expressed skepticism that Scott Roeder, the anti-abortion extremist who fatally shot Dr. George Tiller in Kansas in 2009, was a lone wolf, on the basis that he had extensive ties to the extreme wing of the anti-abortion movement, as well as to other extremists. Similarly, former FBI agent Mike German (2005) rejected the notion that Timothy McVeigh was a lone wolf, not on the basis that he did not act alone, but on the basis that he had extensive connections to a variety of other extremist groups and individuals. German argued that many people considered lone wolves were really products of a sort of "conspiracy" on the part of extremist leaders to mobilize people to violence. Such claims essentially rest on the notion that a lone wolf must have few or no connections to other extremists in order to be considered a true lone wolf—in other words, they must fit the "Loner" definition offered by Pantucci. However, this is a very restrictive definition.

Last, some writers have implicitly or explicitly raised questions about whether or not ideology need play a role in labeling someone a lone wolf. Simon (2013) claims the existence of a class of lone wolf terrorist he dubs the "criminal lone wolf," who is motivated not by ideology but by substantial gain, claiming that acts are terrorist if the tactics used and the effects on government and society are the same as if terrorists had committed them. This is a notion unlikely to receive much acceptance. However, what is more interesting is how many writers claim Bruce Ivins, the man the FBI believes sent the 2001 anthrax-laced letters, was a lone wolf terrorist (including Eby, 2012; Likar, 2011; Michael, 2012; Simon, 2013; among others), despite the fact that no investigation of Ivins has turned up ideological motives. Presumably the long assumption that the anthrax letters were the work of a terrorist continued after and despite the revelation of the perpetrator. Still, since there is a very strong consensus among terrorist experts of all backgrounds that some sort of political, religious, or social motivation is a necessary part of the definition of terrorism, such claims will probably not find purchase in the long run.

When Did Lone Wolves Emerge and Become a Threat?

The fact of lone wolves, as opposed to the concept, dates back centuries, in the sense of isolated acts of political or religious violence by individuals. Many scholarly observers of the lone wolf phenomenon today trace its origins as a tactic to the early anarchist movement of the 19th century, which seems accurate.

Lone wolf terrorist acts continued throughout the 20th century (Johann Georg Elser's 1939 assassination attempt on Adolf Hitler is one of many examples, though a rare action that might not be condemned), but it took decades for the concept of the

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

lone wolf terrorist to emerge. One reason is that thinking on terrorism well into the 21st century tended to be dominated by an overemphasis on terrorist *groups*, whether state-sponsored or aligned with a particular ideology or cause. Even after the end of the Cold War, groups like Al Qaeda, Hamas, or Hezbollah, as well as nationalist groups like the IRA and ETA, kept attention focused on organizations, despite the fact that all extremist movements consist of a variety of groups *and* individuals, with the possibility of some of the latter acting without necessarily joining the former. Moreover, the circumstances that can allow an Al Qaeda or IRA to survive over a long period of time simply do not exist in many places.

Although isolated references to "lone wolves" as terrorists can be found dating back to the 1960s, lone individuals committing violent acts for many years were often perceived of simply as mentally ill, even if their acts had a clear political or ideological character. Writing in the 1980s, for example, Richard Rubenstein (1987) questioned whether Lee Harvey Oswald was a "leftist conspirator, a rightist pretending to be a leftist, or a psychotic lone wolf." In the 1980s, following assassination attempts such as the unsuccessful attempts on Pope John Paul II in 1981 or Rajiv Gandhi in 1986, media speculation sometimes referred to the would-be assassins as lone wolves (see, e.g., Barnetson, 1986). As late as 1991, terrorism consultant Paul Joyal (Crossfire, 1991) described a lone wolf simply as a "mentally unbalanced individual" who may attempt a violent act.

One of the first scholars to identify and understand the "lone wolf" as a being motivated by ideology rather than simple pathology was historian Ze'ev Iviansky (1977), who described "lone wolf" terrorism as "a desperate protest, a declaration of faith by means of 'the deed' . . . carried out by an individual on his own initiative, and directed against another individual or individuals, symbolic of his protest." Iviansky characterized it as "the vengeance of the deprived, frustrated and doomed on the established order." In the 1980s, others began to use the term as well. Horchem (1982), for example, described Gundolf Köhler, a neo-Nazi who bombed the Munich Oktoberfest in 1980, causing considerable casualties, as "a lone wolf without an organization." Israeli journalist Ehud Ya'ari (1993) described the "growing incidence of terror" from young Palestinians, "lone-wolf terror, which has neither a headquarters nor operatives who can be held responsible."

In the United States, it took the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995 to shake some people out of the groups-only paradigm. Further high-profile incidents in the late 1990s, most notably the acts of Eric Rudolph, Benjamin Smith, and Buford Furrow, caused a belated realization that lone wolf terror existed in the United States. In 1998, the *Washington Post* (Suro, 1998) reported on a classified Justice Department study describing "individuals who are inspired by, but not affiliated with, terrorist groups, thus making them harder to identify and stop." Robert Blitzer, then head of the FBI's counterterrorism section, claimed to see "three, four, five new cases every year of people who have links to white supremacist groups . . . and who ended up plotting or committing violent acts. These are usually rootless guys with a high level of frustration in their lives who go out on their own." Concern over the phenomenon became great enough that in late 2001, preparing for the upcoming Winter Olympics scheduled

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

for Utah, the FBI included an awareness presentation on lone wolves at their last major security conference (this author was the presenter).

Through the first decade of the 21st century, awareness of the lone wolf phenomenon spread as it became increasingly obvious that a number of different extreme movements within the United States were spawning lone wolves or even promoting the concept. Moreover, it became increasingly clear that many individuals now received much of their exposure to extremism through the Internet and that some movements were able to mobilize lone wolves through the same means. Extremist movements not only provided the motivation but also targets and guidance. Groups or individuals associated with a variety of different extreme movements established Web pages with lists of targets of all conceivable types, from individuals to businesses to houses of worship, while other extremists provided on-line manuals for constructing explosive or incendiary devices (examples from the Animal Liberation Front and Earth Liberation Front include titles such as "ARSON-AROUND with Auntie ALF," "Setting Fires with Electrical Timers: An Earth Liberation Front Guide," and "Guide to Direct Action, 2010").

Despite this, attention paid to lone wolves was still fairly scattershot until 2009, a year in which a number of deadly lone wolf attacks occurred, a few of them quite high-profile, including the assassination of Dr. Tiller by Scott Roeder, the attack on the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum by James von Brunn, and especially the Fort Hood shooting spree of Nidal Hassan (Pitcavage, 2010). These incidents galvanized the media, law enforcement and the government, and academia. Indeed, the vast majority of articles and books that examine the lone wolf phenomenon have been published only since 2009. By now, however, even if its particulars are not agreed upon, there is broad consensus that the lone wolf phenomenon exists and poses a danger.

What Motivates Lone Wolves?

Perhaps the most difficult question is from what sources lone wolves derive their motivation to act. Here the debate is typically framed as the degree to which lone wolves may be motivated by ideology or by mental illness (or other emotional, psychological, or personal pressures). A group of experts analyzing aspects of modern terrorism (Simi, 2010) summed up the debate by noticing that that there seemed to be two distinct interpretations. The first perspective views lone wolves as "isolated, deranged loners who typically suffer from psychological maladjustment. Characterological dysfunction, not politics, motivates these individuals to harm and kill innocent citizens . . . lone wolves are motivated by grievances that are primarily personal and do not extend into the broader, public realm of politics." The second view, they suggest, believes that "the focus on the lone wolf as pathological diminishes the importance of a broader network of extremist groups and the culture they create."

Observers who place a primacy on psychological motivations tend to deprivilege the role of ideology. Former FBI agent Kathleen Puckett, for example, claimed (Turchie & Puckett, 2007; Vollers, 2007) that Eric Rudolph was motivated not by his opposition to abortion but rather a "gnawing loneliness to belong." According to

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

Puckett, Rudolph and other lone wolves had a psychopathology where "they all desperately wanted to be a part of a group, but because of some personality deficit, none of them was able to fit in." Other students of the phenomenon, while not denying that mental illness plays a role among some lone wolves, are far more likely to take Rudolph at his word (Vollers, 2007) when he explained that the reason why he acted as he did was because "I actually believe in the ideas contained in my [court] statement and allocution." It does not seem unreasonable that a person who has very strong feelings about an extreme cause may be motivated to commit extreme acts on behalf of that cause, even if other considerations may also consciously or unconsciously play a role in the decision-making process.

Many students of the lone wolf phenomenon seem to agree that, while ideology in general plays the stronger role among lone wolf perpetrators, the incidence of mental illness among lone wolves may be higher than among people involved in group forms of terrorism (among others, see Bakker & de Graaf, 2010; Eby, 2012; Hewitt, 2003; Pantucci, 2011; Spaaij, 2010, 2012). Pedahzur and Perliger (2009) agree that the majority of studies reject the notion that ideological and "rational" reasons for terrorist acts are negligible but offer an intriguing hypothesis as to why some people who may have "mental tribulations" might choose a terrorist path for channeling "their fury and insanity." They suggest that in other circumstances such individuals would express their mental disorders in various ways, perhaps even violently, but not necessarily against the typical targets of terrorists. However, if the groupings with which the individual identifies "face growing security threats" and if the individual "experiences a decline in personal welfare and safety," the chances that a person's violence will become politicized will increase, as will the chance that their violence will be aimed at perceived "enemies" of the groupings to which they belong. This explanation fits well with the known histories of a number of lone wolf terrorists.

The Lone Wolf as Perceived by Extremists

Many observers, looking at extremist movements from the outside, naturally perceive terrorism that stems from independent cells or isolated individuals as a significant and growing threat. Evidence does exist on which to base such concerns, including the successes of groups like the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) and the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) in the early 2000s or the number of domestic terrorists in the United States seemingly actually inspired by Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula's *Inspire* magazine (Anti-Defamation League, 2013). Still, no extremist movement is monolithic and debates on tactics are as frequent as debates on ideology. Often there are debates between adherents who argue for independent cell/individual action (they do not necessarily distinguish between the two) and those who feel such actions actually serve to damage their movement rather than serve its interests.

Nowhere is this debate more clear than among white supremacists within the United States, who have for years argued over the issue. Their debate thus serves as a useful lens through which to view some of the ways that extremists themselves

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

may perceive such tactics (realizing that movements will all have their own separate internal dialogues).

Although Kaplan (2000) points to some earlier pioneers of the concept of lone violent action, most students of white supremacy, including Kaplan, agree that it was Louis Beam who really popularized the concept among white supremacists with an essay dubbed "Leaderless Resistance" (Beam, 1983; a revised version of the essay, written in 1992, was published in Beam's newsletter *The Seditionist* and has since been widely distributed, including across the Internet). Having witnessed the misfortunes of various white supremacist groups in the 1980s due to criminal or civil legal action, including his own, Beam became skeptical of the utility of hierarchically organized white supremacist groups, finding them vulnerable—particularly when "utilized in a resistance movement against state tyranny." Instead, Beam advocated for "very small or even one man cells of resistance." Beam's essay became one of the most well-known pieces of writing among white supremacists and eventually transcended the white supremacist movement into other right-wing extremist movements, such as the militia movement (see Beam, 1996), and even further afield.

Kaplan has claimed that leaderless resistance "sought to make a virtue of weakness and political isolation" and characterized it as "a last gasp of defiance by the American radical right, which was then at the nadir of its already bleak fortunes." Leaderless resistance did not turn out to be a last gasp (as the extreme right would enjoy resurgences from 1994-2000 and again from 2009 to the present), but as a strategy it does seek to evade the strong policing powers of modern states. However, it is important to recognize as well that as a strategy it is also essentially superfluous, because the fundamental fact of domestic terrorism and extremist-related violence in the United States since the early 1980s is that the vast majority of such violence is not committed by organized groups acting as groups but rather by individuals or informal cells acting apart from organized groups. This is true regardless of the movement from which the violence emanates. With limited exceptions (such as the organized crime of racist prison gangs), even when the perpetrators of such violence are members of extremist groups, they typically do not commit those crimes at the *behest* of those groups.

One of the main reasons for this state of affairs is that extremist groups in a country like the United States, even those with a high association of violence, are not equivalent to "classic" terrorist groups that exist to a great degree in order to commit violent acts. Rather, extremist groups in the United States, like the larger movements to which they belong, help radicalize individuals who may, on their own or in the company of like-minded people, go off to commit violent acts. In January 2011, for example, a group of white supremacists firebombed the home of an interracial couple in Hardy, Arkansas. According to Anti-Defamation League records, the various perpetrators were members or associates of a wide variety of white supremacist groups, including Blood and Honour USA, Aryan Terror Brigade, Aryan Circle, Smash Team 88, Golden State Skinheads, and the Aryan Brotherhood, but when they committed their crime they were not acting for any of those groups. If one imagines this informal cell of radicals as animal rights extremists firebombing a research facility or domestic Muslim

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

extremists plotting to bomb an Army recruiting station, one will be much closer to understanding the true picture of domestic terrorism in the United States.

Among white supremacists there have been many promoters of either leaderless resistance generally, or lone wolf activism specifically. Some promoters, such as New Jersey white supremacist Hal Turner, were interested more in simply inciting violence than in advocating conscious tactics, as in 2006, when Turner responded to plans by pro-immigration advocates to hold a "National Day of Action" by urging violence against such demonstrators. "April 10 is the day we fight," Turner told his followers in an Internet posting (Turner, 2006). "DON'T TELL ANYONE WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO DO; JUST DO IT . . . This is the perfect scenario, opportunity and obligation for LONE WOLF action." Turner later spent several years in prison for making similar inciting statements against federal judges in Illinois.

Other white supremacists have more consciously advocated lone wolf activity as a specific tactic. Over the past 20 years, one of the principal such activists has been Tom Metzger, who in the late 1980s lost a civil lawsuit brought against him and his organization, White Aryan Resistance, by the Southern Poverty Law Center on behalf of relatives of a victim killed by followers of Metzger (Dees and Fifer, 1993). In the pages of his magazine, also called White Aryan Resistance, as well as through other means, Metzger repeatedly promoted the idea of isolated cells of white supremacists or white supremacists acting alone. "I support [Timothy] McVeigh, [Joseph Paul] Franklin, [Robert Jay] Mathews, James Earl Ray, [Gordon] Kahl and the type who may go down but . . . leave an important legacy," he stated in his magazine in 1999 (Metzger, 1999a), ". . . lone wolves, in due time, will be the Generals in the future when in-the-field organizations are possible again."

In another issue (Metzger, 1999b), he told his followers that "if you are an intelligent type you will be able to either operate safely as a Lone Wolf or with a very small, trustworthy cell . . . Remember, one person with guts, brains and understanding can control thousands." Several years later, Metzger (2005) informed his adherents that "anyone who looks at the world today must see Lone Wolf and networking everywhere." Metzger dubiously offered up Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda as lone wolves, then, on firmer ground, noted that "Eric Rudolph would still be free if he had not made one simple error. Even then he was free for a long time."

Metzger also printed articles about lone wolf activities by other white supremacists (for example, Anonymous, 2000a, 2000b). One such article, "Advice for the Lone Wolf" (Anonymous, 2000a), told readers that "our only real hope lies in small numbers of people acting individually or in very small groups" and also that lone wolves should understand that they expendable: "You must accept in your own mind, before you begin, that you are committing suicide just as effectively as if you threw yourself in front of an oncoming train." Metzger also occasionally printed articles by mainstream sources on the subject, if he liked what they said, such as an article (Metzger, 2000) summarizing a presentation by RAND Corporation adviser Brian Jenkins (later published as Jenkins, 2001) describing much right-wing violence as organized "in accordance with a doctrine called 'leaderless resistance.'"

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

For a time, in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Metzger acolyte Alex Curtis outshined his master (Anti-Defamation League, 2000), showering the white supremacist world with lone wolf advocacy in his newsletter, The *Nationalist Observer*, as well as online with the "Nationalist Observer Racial Reader's Forum List" and by telephone with his "Weekly Racist Broadcasts." Curtis was mobilized by figures such as Eric Rudolph and Benjamin Smith, the latter of whom Curtis described as an "Aryan Kamikaze." Following the Smith shooting spree, Curtis (1999a) advocated that white supremacists work as individuals and small cells and predicted that "we are doing to see a rush of lone wolf violence that will shock this country and provoke a radical change . . . Benjamin Smith was not the last. He was one of the very, very first." To Curtis (Racial Reader Summary, 1999b), the ideal lone wolf was one with "little or no past connection with [the] racial movement."

In his writings, Curtis provided advice for would-be lone wolves, such as "always make sure your crimes are done 100% alone and make sure they are worth the risk" (Curtis, 1999b), and described the perceived practical advantages of the lone wolf tactic. Chief among these was the ability to avoid law enforcement scrutiny, before or after an action. To Curtis, the ideal lone wolf was one who could strike more than once. "We need more Eric Rudolphs on the run," he suggested (Racial Reader Summary, 1999c), "and fewer [Benjamin] Smiths and [Buford] Furrows who are pegged by law enforcement an hour after an action, then captured or killed. However, Curtis did not last very long as an advocate before he and several accomplices were charged with federal hate crimes laws for vandalizing local synagogues and other similar incidents. After serving a short prison sentence, Curtis dropped out of the movement.

Despite advocates like Curtis, many white supremacists were lukewarm or openly hostile to the concepts of leaderless resistance and lone wolves. Not surprisingly, many opponents were leaders or members of organized white supremacist groups. Prominent among these was William Pierce, leader of the neo-Nazi National Alliance until his death in 2002. Some have interpreted Pierce as a supporter of the lone wolf concept, primarily because of his pseudonymous novel *Hunter* (1989), dedicated to white supremacist serial killer Joseph Paul Franklin and depicting a Franklin-like sniper targeting multiracial couples. However, Oscar Yeager, the lone wolf depicted in the novel, actually does join an organization during the course of the book (a thinly veiled version of the National Alliance). Moreover, Pierce envisioned his organization as the vanguard of a future white revolution and leaderless resistance did not exactly fit with that model. Consequently, Pierce both spoke out against leaderless resistance himself and allowed proxies to do the same, such as an article by Eric Hollyoak (2000) titled "The Fallacy of Leaderless Resistance," in which Hollyoak relegated the concept to "blatant ineptitude and rank incompetence," a tactic that would never result in a successful insurgency. Other white supremacists echoed this theme. To Robert Nicholas Becker (1999), a convicted murderer writing to a white supremacist magazine from prison, leaderless resistance was a myth because "extreme organization is fundamental and realizing our goals, and without it, no ends will be met."

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

Other white supremacists over the years, in arguments and debates on websites such as Stormfront, have offered other arguments against leaderless resistance and lone wolf action. In the interest of brevity, they can be summarized thusly:

1. The white supremacist movement is already too disparate and actually needs leadership to unite the movement and give it purpose.
2. Leaderless resistance and lone wolf activity give too many people excuses for inaction, i.e., declaring that one is a lone wolf as an excuse to avoid taking part in group-led activities.
3. Such activities are ineffectual and cannot accomplish much.
4. Such activities are not very compatible with "real-world" needs, such as feeding and supporting a family.
5. Lone wolves have no one they can depend on for support or assistance.
6. Senseless or ill-conceived acts by lone wolves can significantly hurt the movement and bring law enforcement and the government down upon it. Such opinions are frequently offered in the immediate aftermath of a lone wolf incident, such as the 2012 Sikh temple shootings by Wade Michael Page.

For many, one major problem with leaderless resistance and lone wolf actions is that they allow for such a limited range of activities. On one side of the spectrum of possibilities are minor examples of activism such as anonymously distributing white supremacist literature. On the other end are violent hate crimes and acts of terrorism. But between those two narrow areas is a huge gap that consists of virtually all of the other tools at the disposal of a political, social or religious movement. It is because of such factors that many white supremacists do not seriously consider the idea of becoming a lone wolf. This may also help explain why so many lone wolves are, in effect, self-generated, rather than generated because of pro-active efforts by an extremist movement.

The Lone Wolf Concept in Practice

Understanding how lone wolf violence actually operates, as opposed to how extremists might wish it to, is key to understanding the phenomenon. I have compiled a list (see the appendix), drawn from the Anti-Defamation League's database of extremist-related murders and killings from 1970 to the present day, of 35 lone offenders who might arguably fit as examples of the lone wolf phenomenon. In choosing the sample, I limited the date range from 1993 to 2012, although in a couple of cases, perpetrators are included who committed additional murders before the beginning of this time period.

I excluded from the sample murders that were clearly not ideological in nature, such as murdering a spouse. This includes several spree killings the perpetrators of which had past extremist ties that seemed entirely coincidental to the violence. For example, in 2009, Frank Garcia, a self-identified sovereign citizen, killed four people and wounded a fifth in upstate New York. However, the killings were directly related

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

to Garcia's recent firing. Similarly, in 2007, a one-time Aryan Nations member, Jason Hamilton, embarked upon a shooting spree in Moscow, Idaho, killing his wife and two other people who worked at the courthouse where she did, but ideology seemed to have played no role in the killings. I have also excluded murders that were essentially intra- or intergroup related, such as murdering a suspected informant.

Notably, the selection for this study differs from selections made by some other students of the lone wolf phenomenon in that the perpetrators selected for this comparison all killed at least one person. This was a deliberate choice. While it may preclude an overall analysis of how likely lone wolf perpetrators are to be "successful," especially compared to attempts at violence by extremists organized in cells or groups, it has the advantage of excluding from consideration a number of individuals arrested in sting operations who typically had grandiose plans or notions that were unlikely to have come to fruition. Examples of such individuals from recent years include Ivan Duane Braden, Demetrius Van Crocker, Ahmed Al-Uqaily, and Matthew Aaron Llaneza, among others. In other words, the selection here concentrates on and analyzes those individuals who actually were successful in committing a lethal act of lone wolf violence.

Ideological Composition

An examination of the movements into which the perpetrators fall suggests seven broad categories: (1) anarchists/left-wing extremists; (2) domestic Muslim extremists; and various categories of right-wing extremists: (3) sovereign citizens; (4) tax protesters; (5) other antigovernment extremists; (6) anti-abortion extremists, and (7) white supremacists (of whatever submovement). The category of "other" antigovernment extremists includes right-wing survivalists (Peck and Bracklow) as well as individuals (Cook and Stewart) who fit broadly into the antigovernment "Patriot" movement, but not neatly into one of its major sub-movements.

When these categories are compared to a list of major domestic extremist movements in the United States with an association with criminal activity, certain omissions are obvious. There are no animal rights or environmental extremists in the list, despite the fact that both single-issue movements condone leaderless resistance and lone wolf tactics. The explanation lies in the fact that, with rare exceptions, the movement tends to target property rather than people. The other glaring omission is the absence of the militia movement despite its moderate to high association with criminal activity. Here, the answer may lie in the fact that the militia movement tends toward plots and conspiracies by militia groups/cells, rather than direct actions by lone individuals.

Of the perpetrators in this sample (Figure 1), an overwhelming majority belong to right-wing extremist movements: 86% ($n = 30$) of the lone perpetrators belong to one or another right-wing extremist movement. Of these, white supremacists make up the majority, composing 49% ($n = 17$) of the whole selection. The second most numerous right-wing perpetrators are, interestingly, anti-abortion extremists, even though they are the smallest in overall numbers of the right-wing extremist movements (and whose violence, moreover, peaked in the early to mid-1990s). The reason is that assassination

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

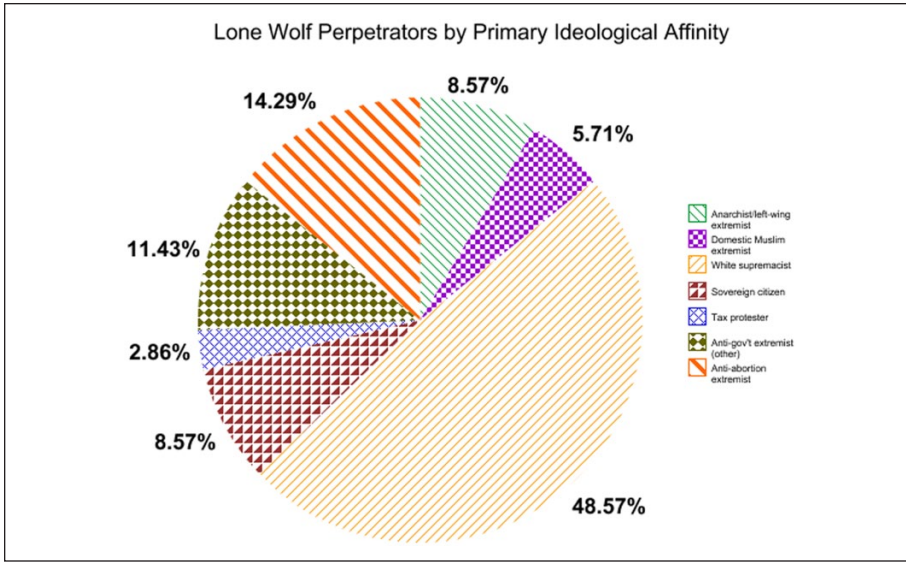

Figure 1. Ideology.

of physicians or clinic workers providing abortion services is condoned within the extreme wing of the anti-abortion movement.

Several other factors regarding extremist movements merit comment. The first is that several perpetrators on the list—all of them right-wing extremists—adhered to the tenets of more than one movement. Eric Rudolph had white supremacist convictions as well as anti-abortion convictions, Larry Peck was a white supremacist as well as antigovernment extremist, Richard Poplawski was not only a white supremacist but also subscribed to all the major antigovernment conspiracy theories of the "Patriot" movement, Scott Roeder was a sovereign citizen as well as an anti-abortion extremist, and Daniel Wacht, a white supremacist, told police about sovereign citizen leanings. These examples illustrate the considerable overlap that exists among the large number of right-wing extremist movements in the United States. For purpose of analysis, their apparent "primary" ideological affinity was used.

The second factor is that a few individuals on the list had barely-formed ideological beliefs or ideological beliefs that were still in the process of forming. Christopher Monfort is perhaps the best example of this type of individual. Monfort, who in 2009 firebombed police vehicles at a maintenance yard in Seattle, Washington, then some days later shot two police officers, one fatally, had developed considerable antipolice attitudes seemingly coming from a left-wing perspective.

Finally, it is worth noting that, though all of these individuals engaged in lone violent action, for most incidents there is little evidence that they were doing so consciously as a "lone wolf." Prior to his shooting rampage, Richard Baumhammers allegedly downloaded "treatises" on lone wolf terrorism (Roddy, 2001). A year prior

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

to his shootings, Paul Hill had reportedly written about taking "Phineas actions," a reference to the Phineas Priesthood, a concept of self-appointed vigilantes for God invented by white supremacist Richard Kelly Hoskins (Hoskins, 1990; Lessner, 1999). Buford Furrow was almost certainly aware of this concept as well (and had another book by Hoskins in his vehicle at the time of his spree). However, in the majority of incidents, there is no evidence to suggest that individuals were consciously acting as lone wolves, as opposed to simply acting alone.

Lethality

All of the individuals in this sample killed at least one person. In total, they killed 76 people and injured or wounded approximately 260 more (for some attacks, casualty numbers differ slightly). Two perpetrators, Eric Rudolph and Nidal Hasan, are responsible for 15 of the deaths and about 155 of the wounded. Nine other perpetrators only killed a single individual. In all other incidents, multiple victims were killed and/or injured.

The incidents in the sample can each be divided into up to three phases. The first phase is the initial incident phase, such as a shooting or a bombing. The second phase is the follow-on phase, which, if it occurs, typically consists of the perpetrator moving to a second location to continue a violence spree and/or subsequent confrontations with police attempting to stop or apprehend the perpetrator. The third phase is the subsequent attack phase, in which, if applicable, a perpetrator conducts one (or more) subsequent attacks in later days or even years. Of the casualties caused by the perpetrators, the vast majority (64 killed and about 217 wounded) occurred during an initial attack. Six of the perpetrators engaged in follow-on violence, killing six and wounding eight more. In two incidents, those involving Buford Furrow and Jacob Robida, no fatal casualties occurred in the initial incident; the fatalities occurred only during the follow-on violence.

Finally, only four of the perpetrators (Jonathan Haynes, Mark Stroman, Eric Rudolph, and Theodore Kaczynski) were able to survive their initial act of violence unscathed and uncaught and subsequently engage in one or more subsequent acts of violence. This stark statistic gives the lie to one of the rationales used by extremists to promote lone wolf action—that the lone wolf can strike again and again. Actually, this rarely happens, for both tactical and mental/emotional reasons. As will be seen, most perpetrators choose firearms as a weapon and shootings are relatively easy for police to respond to (and investigate). In addition, it is clear that, in many cases, surviving the initial encounter was not necessarily a priority for the perpetrators (some scholars have distinguished between "chaos" and "career" lone wolves, or "risk-seeking" and "risk-averse" lone wolves). Overall, 26 of the 35 perpetrators survived their last violent encounter (though some died or committed suicide not long after, while others were seriously wounded). Of the nine who did not survive, fully six of them committed suicide, typically as police closed in.

Almost all the perpetrators used firearms for their violence. There were only a few exceptions. Theodore Kaczynski and Eric Rudolph were both serial bombers. Joseph Stack used a plane as a suicide weapon, while Paul Powell used a knife. One

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

perpetrator, Jacob Robida, used both a hatchet and a firearm. Large bombs, such as truck bombs, were nonexistent, as were "exotic" weapons, such as ricin, anthrax, radiological materials, or chemical weapons. Interestingly, incendiary devices or firebombs were also absent, despite being weapons of choice for many anti-abortion extremists, animal rights and environmental extremists, and white supremacists. Firearms were used by the majority because extremists, when choosing weapons, tend to stick within their comfort zone, as defined by both the society in which they live and the extremist subculture to which they belong. In the United States, firearms are both plentiful and accepted and they are also the weapons of choice for many extremist movements, especially right-wing extremists. Explosive devices are used less often and, when they are used, the target is often property. Even when targeting people, devices may not explode (as in the 2011 case of Kevin Harpham, who tried to use a backpack bomb against a Martin Luther King, Jr., day parade in Spokane, Washington). However, if prepared and targeted carefully, bombing attempts can be more difficult for police to investigate (some such investigations, such as the mail bomb investigations involving Kaczynski or Dennis Mahon, can take years to complete).

Most of the perpetrators, 63% ($n = 22$) engaged in a substantial degree of planning for the violence that they used. Depending on the circumstances, the planning could include construction of explosive devices, assembling stockpiles of weapons and ammunition, target selection, and overcoming other obstacles. An additional 9% ($n = 3$) engaged in at least some planning or contemplation, though it may have been largely abstract. Donald Mathews, for example, a sovereign citizen from Ohio who killed a Massillon police officer in the wake of a traffic stop, had some years earlier told others what he would do if a police officer ever pulled him over, a plan that he would follow eerily closely in 2003.

However, with 29% ($n = 10$) of the perpetrators, there was little to no planning involved in their violence. Many of these instances were what might be called reactive in nature, when sudden circumstances caused a violent reaction on the part of the extremist, motivated to some degree by his ideology. For example, Richard Poplawski (Pitcavage, 2009), a white supremacist and antigovernment extremist who in the preceding 6 months had grown increasingly hostile to and suspicious of the police, reacted violently in 2009 when police came to the Pittsburgh home where he and his mother lived. He ambushed and killed three officers, then engaged police in a subsequent standoff that resulted in the wounding of an additional officer and an injury to another. A number of the antigovernment incidents in this sample are of the reactive variety, which corresponds to the large degree of reactive violence coming from such extremists generally, especially adherents of the sovereign citizen movement.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that, with the exception of a few incidents targeting police, almost all of these incidents involved "soft targets," typically civilians totally unprepared for the prospect of violence. This factor accounts for both the frequent lethality of lone wolf attacks as well as one of the reasons why some extremists dislike them: because they do not target the "real" perceived enemy but rather civilians whose deaths are likely to evoke sympathy.

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

Ideological Versus Other Factors

Of the 35 perpetrators in the sample, ideology seems to have played a substantial role in the majority of the violent acts. The violence of 63% (n = 22) of the perpetrators seems to have been direct action—that is, proactive violent acts directly aimed at perceived enemies. In an additional 17% (n = 6), typically cases of reactive violence, ideology seems to have played a substantial role in their violent reaction. For 14% (n = 5), ideology played only a secondary role in the violence. The case of Matthew Stewart illustrates this category. Stewart was an antigovernment extremist who ambushed police officers executing a search warrant on his home, killing one officer and wounding five more. Although his ideology almost certainly played *some* role in his decision to engage in violence, at least as pertinent, if not more so, was that he was engaging in substantial marijuana cultivation and had traditional criminal reasons for fear of or anger against the police as well as ideological reasons. Finally, in 6% of the sample (n = 2), the role played by ideology was at best slight.

What is interesting, though, is that although ideology was a powerful motivator in most of these incidents, most of the perpetrators operated, in terms of involvement and activity, primarily at the fringes of their movements. When one looks at the relationship between the individuals and the extremist movements to which they adhered, in 69% of the cases (n = 24) the perpetrators were essentially on the periphery of their own movements, with little involvement with organized groups, mass activity, online involvement with others, or other activities. For only 26% (n = 9) is there evidence of substantial involvement, whether with specific groups or in the more general subculture of the movement. In 6% (n = 2) of the incidents, the perpetrators were somewhat involved. Michael Griffin, for example, operated on the periphery of the anti-abortion movement until only about a month before his violent attack, when he joined a group—not really long enough to establish a substantial connection.

It is worth pointing out, though, that being on the periphery of a movement does not automatically make someone a loner or *unable* to engage meaningfully with others. That characterization is certainly applicable to a number of individuals mentioned here, such as Richard Baumhammers or Keith Luke, but hardly all. Richard Poplawski, for example, operated on the periphery of white supremacist and antigovernment extremist movements. However, for another, more mainstream movement he cared deeply about, the gun rights movement, Poplawski chose not to remain on the periphery, instead joining and becoming quite active in a local gun rights group. Here it was not an issue of inability to interact with others so much as a choice as to where he would put his activist energies.

A key reason, though, why individuals such as Baumhammers and Luke were probably unable to penetrate further into the white supremacist movement was the substantial degree of mental illness that they possessed, which clearly affected their ability to socialize. However, in this context, the issue of mental illness (as well as related psychological, emotional, or "real-world" stresses) is often not nearly as clear cut as it is in those two cases. A long medical history of mental illness, for example, does not hold the same weight as an indicator as a mere claim by a defense attorney

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

that their client is mentally ill. Defense attorneys frequently raise mental health issues in cases in which there are lone wolf perpetrators, not least because doing so offers benefits to the client (often not with an insanity defense, which have a low success rate in the United States, but in pre- or post-trial proceedings or appeals to save a defendant from a death penalty).

Moreover, it is not uncommon for mental health professionals tasked with evaluating a perpetrator for possible mental illness to conflate ideological beliefs with delusions or paranoia, especially if that professional has never encountered the ideology before. Sovereign citizens are particularly at risk for this misdiagnosis (Pitcavage, 2000), due to their highly esoteric beliefs about government, but others have also been described as being delusional simply for having ideological convictions common to the movements to which they belong, such as the belief among white supremacists that Jews control the government. For example, in 1998, Dr. Sally Johnson provided a court-ordered forensic psychiatric evaluation of Theodore Kaczynski in connection with his trial that included a lengthy case history that clearly demonstrated Kaczynski's antisocial attitudes as well as his anger and past periods of depression. However, she also diagnosed Kaczynski as paranoid schizophrenic, in large part due to alleged delusions, one of which consisted of his beliefs that modern technology was bad, that it was often used to control people (such as through advertising) and that it harmed freedom and personal dignity. Yet those are ideological opinions, held not just by Kaczynski but also by many so-called "green anarchists," rather than the isolated product of a diseased mind. Such interpretations have caused some to question the accuracy of such a diagnosis (see, e.g., Magid, 2009).

Based on what is known about the perpetrators in the sample, which can vary considerably from case to case but is more often than not less than what would be desired, an inspection of the 35 individuals here suggests, tentatively, that 7 of the 35 perpetrators (20%) may have suffered from a degree of mental illness ranging from moderate to substantial. In an additional 4 cases (11%), some degree of mental illness seemed possible. In the remaining 24 cases (69%), however, there was no real evidence of noteworthy mental illness. These figures suggest—again, tentatively—that lone wolf perpetrators tend to have a higher incidence of mental illness than the general population, but not by a large degree.

It should be noted, however, that additional stresses—due to finances, work, relationships, and other factors—can also have a significant effect both on one's well-being as well as whether or not an individual might resort to violence. About a quarter of the perpetrators in the sample ($n = 9$) seemed to be suffering from one or more other sorts of pressure at the time they first engaged in violence. In the other cases, no such pressures could readily be identified, though this does not mean that they did not exist. It certainly seems plausible that in a number of acts of lone wolf violence, nonideological external pressures helped motivate the perpetrator to violence, but the perpetrator's ideology chose the path such violence would take.

Based on the indications in this sample, the future looks relatively bleak in terms of dealing with the lone wolf phenomenon. Some who have examined the phenomenon have even said that "nothing" can be done (Barnes, 2012). This is perhaps

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

too pessimistic a view. Law enforcement "sting" operations can theoretically find and eliminate some potential lone wolf threats. For example, in 2008, FBI agents, alerted by the Anti-Defamation League and by items observed in his vehicle by local police during a routine traffic stop, concluded that a domestic Muslim extremist, Michael Finton (also known as Talib Islam), posed a risk for violence and conducted a sting operation in which Finton was provided with the purported means to blow up the Springfield, Illinois, Federal Building. Finton unsuccessfully tried to detonate the dummy explosives and was arrested. He eventually pleaded guilty in 2011. However, such tactics, useful as they are, do little to stop the prospective lone wolf who reaches for an assault rifle or a handgun rather than fantasizing about a truck bomb. In other words, they will typically be ineffective in finding or stopping the most lethal type of lone wolf. Leaving aside politically unlikely efforts to control gun violence in the United States, in all likelihood the best way to mitigate the harm that lone wolves do is to expand and encourage the training of law enforcement officers in "active shooter" techniques. Lone wolves themselves will continue to emerge from the forests on the fringes of our society.

Appendix

Lone Wolf Perpetrators Used as Analytic Sample

Theodore John Kaczynski. Starting in 1978, Ted Kaczynski, dubbed the "Unabomber" by the media, engaged in a serial bombing campaign that lasted until his apprehension in 1996. He committed 16 bombing attacks that killed a total of three people and injured 23. Most of the targets were directed against academics, airlines, or people involved with computers, reflecting his anti-technological "green anarchist" attitudes. He pleaded guilty and received a sentence of life in prison without parole.

Michael Frederick Griffin. On March 10, 1993, Griffin, an anti-abortion extremist, confronted a physician, David Gunn, during a protest outside an abortion clinic and shot him three times in the back, killing him. He surrendered quietly to police. He was convicted of murder in 1994 and received a life sentence.

Jonathan Preston Haynes. On August 6, 1993, Haynes, a self-declared neo-Nazi, shot and killed a Chicago-area plastic surgeon, claiming that he wanted to warn the world about the coming extinction of Aryans. Arrested a day later, he subsequently confessed to having also killed a San Francisco hair-colorist in 1987 for similar reasons. He was convicted of the Chicago killing in 1994.

John C. Salvi III. On December 30, 1994, anti-abortion extremist John Salvi embarked upon a shooting spree at two abortion clinics in the Boston area, killing two and wounding five others. He then drove to Norfolk, Virginia, where he opened fire at an abortion clinic there until police arrested him. He was convicted in 1996 of murder and other charges and received consecutive life prison sentences. He committed suicide not long after.

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

Larry Wayne Shoemake. On April 12, 1996, white supremacist Larry Shoemake opened fire at a shopping center in a largely African-American neighborhood in Jackson, Mississippi, killing one person and wounding 10 more. A standoff with police developed, during which Shoemake committed suicide by setting on fire the building in which he took refuge.

Carl Drega. On August 19, 1997, self-declared sovereign citizen Carl Drega opened fire on two New Hampshire state troopers following a traffic stop, killing both of them. Drega then drove to the office of a local judge with whom he had had previous quarrels and killed her. He also killed a local newspaper editor who came to the judge's aid. Drega returned to his booby-trapped property, set it on fire, then died in a subsequent shootout with law enforcement across the Vermont border after wounding several more officers.

Eric Robert Rudolph. On July 27, 1996, Eric Rudolph detonated a bomb at the Atlanta Olympics that killed one person and injured more than a hundred others. Raised with exposure to white supremacy, Rudolph developed an extreme antipathy to abortion and homosexuals as well. He subsequently bombed two abortion clinics and a lesbian bar in Georgia and Alabama. He was arrested after 5 years as a fugitive and confessed to his crimes.

James Charles Kopp. On October 23, 1998, anti-abortion extremist James Kopp shot and killed a physician who provided abortions in Amherst, New York. The attack occurred at the doctor's home. Kopp fled the United States but was eventually arrested in France in 2001. In 2003, Kopp received a conviction of second-degree murder and a subsequent sentence of 25 years to life in prison. Kopp is a suspect in other abortion-related shootings in New York and Canada during the period 1995-1997.

Scott Joseph Merrill. On October 29, 1998, self-described "Constitutionalist" (a term often used by sovereign citizens to refer to themselves) Scott Merrill of Spokane, Washington, opened fire in an ambush-style attack on a county road worker in Utah, hitting him nine times. The motive was not clear, though Merrill did steal some of his belongings. Law enforcement officers arrested him. Merrill subsequently pleaded no contest to aggravated murder and received a life sentence.

Paul Warner Powell. On January 29, 1999, white supremacist Paul Powell went to the home of a teenaged girl he knew to confront her for dating an African American boyfriend. He assaulted the victim, stabbed her in the heart with a knife, then stomped on her throat. Powell then waited until the victim's younger sister came home from school and attacked her as well, raping, strangling, and stabbing her and leaving her for dead. However, she survived and identified her assailant. Eventually, Powell received the death penalty for his crimes and was in fact executed in 2010.

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

Jessy Joe Roten. Racist skinhead Jessy Joe Roten fired shots into the home of a multiracial family in St. Petersburg, Florida, on April 3, 1999. His shots killed a 6-year-old girl and wounded two other girls. Roten was subsequently convicted of murder and other charges and received a life sentence.

Kim Michael Cook. On May 15, 1999, a Palmer, Alaska, police officer encountered antigovernment extremist Kim Michael Cook sleeping in a parked car. A confrontation, then an exchange of shots, ensued, in which Cook killed the officer. Authorities believe that Cook killed the officer because of his hatred of law enforcement. Cook was subsequently convicted of first-degree murder.

Benjamin Nathaniel Smith. During the weekend of July 2-4, 1998, white supremacist Benjamin Smith embarked upon a three-day, two-state shooting spree, targeting racial and religious minorities. He killed two people and wounded eleven before he killed himself as police closed in on him.

Buford O'Neal Furrow Jr. On August 10, 1999, white supremacist Buford Furrow traveled from Tacoma, Washington, to Los Angeles, California, where he opened fire inside a Jewish day care center, injuring three children and two employees. Later that day, Furrow shot dead a Filipino American postal worker. He fled to Las Vegas via taxi, but surrendered at the FBI office there. He stated that he wanted the shooting to be "a wakeup call to America to kill Jews." He pleaded guilty to murder and other charges and received a sentence of life without parole in 2001.

Richard Scott Baumhammers. On April 28, 2000, white supremacist Richard Scott Baumhammers embarked upon a shooting spree in his home town of Pittsburgh. He murdered a Jewish neighbor, set her house on fire, shot at a nearby synagogue and vandalized it, murdered a Southwest Asian man and shot and paralyzed another (he would die from complications seven years later). He shot at a second synagogue, then entered a Chinese restaurant where he murdered three Asian Americans. Finally, he killed an African American man. Shortly thereafter, police arrested him in his vehicle. Baumhammers eventually received the death penalty for his crimes but in 2010 was granted an indefinite stay of execution.

Tracy Allen Hampton. On May 18, 2001, white supremacist Tracy Hampton shot and killed two people, a man and his pregnant girlfriend, at whose house he had been staying. Hampton was angry at the man for purportedly providing information about him to police. He later said that he had killed the woman because he thought she had been made pregnant by a black man. He was arrested two weeks later and eventually convicted of two murders and one manslaughter (of the unborn child).

Richard Gerald Bracklow. On July 26, 2001, two Butte County, California, sheriff's deputies went to a remote cabin belonging to survivalist Richard Bracklow to question him about allegations of threats and stolen weapons. Bracklow engaged

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

the two officers in a gun battle, killing both of them but being mortally wounded in turn.

Larry Peck. On August 22, 2001, antigovernment extremist Larry Peck fled from a traffic stop to his home in Reno, Nevada, where he engaged police in a standoff and shootout. Peck fired at officers with a shotgun, then a rifle, killing one Reno police officer. Peck eventually surrendered to police. He was subsequently convicted of first-degree murder and received two sentences of life without parole.

Joseph Ferguson. In a multiple shooting incident on September 9, 2001, which would soon be eclipsed by the 9/11 terror attacks, white supremacist Joseph Ferguson embarked upon a shooting spree after losing his job and his girlfriend. Ferguson first killed his ex-girlfriend and a coworker of hers, both of whom worked for the security firm from which he had been fired. He killed another employee of the firm at a second location, as well as someone else at that location. He then tracked down another former coworker and handcuffed her but stole her car instead of killing her. He drove to the home of a former supervisor, filmed a video suicide note, killed the supervisor, and stole his car. Two of the victims were racial minorities and authorities speculated race may have played some role. During the spree, he referenced McVeigh and a local spree killer. After engaging police in a high-speed chase (in which he wounded a bystander and an officer), he subsequently committed suicide.

Mark Anthony Stroman. In "retaliation" for the 9/11 terrorist attacks, white supremacist Mark Stroman walked into a convenience store in Dallas on September 15, 2001, and shot to death its Pakistani owner. On September 21, Stroman shot and wounded a Bangladeshi gas station attendant. On October 4, in Mesquite, Texas, Stroman robbed, shot and killed an Indian convenience store worker. Police arrested him for that crime the next day. Stroman was executed in 2011—ironically, one of his victims had long sought to prevent his execution.

Donald W. Matthews. On August 9, 2002, sovereign citizen Donald Matthews drove away from a traffic stop in northeast Ohio. A pursuit ensued that ended in Massillon, Ohio. Both Matthews and officers got out of their vehicles; Mathews pulled out a gun and shot and killed a Massillon police officer. He himself was killed in return fire. Earlier, Matthews had been recorded saying he would kill police officers who tried to pull him over.

Andrew Hampton Mickel. On November 19, 2002, left-wing extremist Andrew Mickel ambushed and killed a Red Bluff, California, police officer, leaving a "Don't Tread On Us" flag next to the body. Subsequently, using a pseudonym, Mickel posted a message on the Internet admitting the crime and explaining that it was done to oppose "police state tactics" and "corporate irresponsibility." He fled to New Hampshire. After he confessed to his parents, his parents turned him in. He represented himself during his trial. He was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to death.

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

George Harold Davis. On June 14, 2003, white supremacist George Davis opened fire on people outside a bar in Ennis, Montana, killing one and wounding six more. He fled the scene but later encountered police, who conducted a pursuit. During the pursuit, he shot a deputy sheriff in the shoulder. He was subsequently shot and arrested. Pleading guilty to murder, he received a sentence of life without parole.

Jacob D. Robida. On February 1, 2006, young white supremacist Jacob Robida walked into a gay bar in New Bedford, Massachusetts, and attacked people with a hatchet and a firearm, wounding three. He fled to West Virginia, picked up a female companion, then continued his flight west. Pulled over by a police officer in Arkansas, he shot and killed the officer. Later cornered by police, he killed his companion and then himself.

Keith Luke. On January 21, 2009, white supremacist Keith Luke embarked upon a spree of violence against ethnic and religious minorities. He raped and shot an African immigrant, and shot and killed her sister, who tried to help her. Shortly thereafter, he shot and killed a homeless African immigrant he encountered. Although he planned to go to a synagogue that evening to kill as many Jews as possible then commit suicide, police intercepted him before he could do so. Luke fired at police during a chase before he crashed his vehicle. Police subsequently arrested him without incident. Luke was convicted of murder in 2013 and committed suicide in prison the following year.

Richard Andrew Poplawski. On April 4, 2009, after his mother called police to remove him from their home following a domestic dispute, white supremacist and antigovernment extremist Richard Poplawski ambushed arriving police officers, killing three of them at his house. Following a standoff and a shootout in which two more officers were wounded or injured, Poplawski himself was injured and captured. He was subsequently convicted of the murders and sentenced to death.

Scott Philip Roeder. On May 31, 2009, anti-abortion extremist (as well as sovereign citizen and tax protester) Scott Roeder shot and killed a physician (who provided abortion services) in Wichita while the physician was attending church. Roeder was arrested several hours later. In 2010, Roeder was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison without chance of parole for 50 years.

Abdulhakim Mujahid Muhammad. On June 1, 2009, Muslim extremist Abdulhakim Mujahid Muhammad opened fire at soldiers standing in front of a U.S. Army recruiting center in Little Rock, Arkansas, killing one and wounding another. He fled but was subsequently arrested and, in 2011, sentenced to life in prison after pleading guilty to murder.

James Wenneker von Brunn. On June 10, 2009, elderly white supremacist James von Brunn entered the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., and opened fire on security guards inside, shooting and killing one of them. Two

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

other security guards returned fire, wounding von Brunn and preventing further deaths. Von Brunn was arrested and charged with murder. He died of natural causes while awaiting trial.

Christopher John Monfort. On October 22, 2009, a firebombing occurred at a Seattle, Washington, city maintenance yard, damaging various police vehicles. Police found a note at the site that threatened police officers. A week and a half later, Christopher Monfort allegedly pulled his vehicle alongside a Seattle police patrol car and fired at its two occupants, killing one and wounding the other. On November 6, officers tracked a lead to the vehicle to the apartment of Monfort. Monfort allegedly pointed a gun at the officers, who wounded him and took him into custody. Charged with aggravated murder, Monfort is on trial as this article goes to press.

Nidal Malik Hasan. On November 5, 2009, U.S. Army Major Nidal Malik Hasan, a psychiatrist, opened fire at the Soldier Readiness Center at Fort Hood, Texas, killing 13 people and wounding 29 more before two police officers shot and disabled him. Hasan, who had been growing more radical in his religious views, including frequent contact with radical Muslim cleric Anwar al-Awlaki, was also upset at the prospect of being deployed to Afghanistan. He was convicted on many counts in 2013 and sentenced to death.

Andrew Joseph Stack III. On February 18, 2010, Joseph Stack set fire to his house, drove to an airport and boarded a plane he owned. He then deliberately flew the plane into a building in Austin, Texas, containing local IRS offices, killing himself and one other person in the process and wounding 13 more. Stack had a past history in the tax protest movement.

Daniel Wacht. Self-proclaimed white supremacist Daniel Wacht was arrested on January 5, 2011, for having kidnapped, killed, and decapitated a North Dakota State University researcher, who went missing after they were seen together on December 31, 2010. He was charged with murder and eventually convicted of that crime in 2013. He was sentenced to life in prison without parole.

Matthew David Stewart. Antigovernment extremist Matthew David Stewart ambushed Ogden, Utah, police officers raiding his home to execute a search warrant looking for marijuana plants. He killed one officer and wounded five more before being captured. Charged with aggravated murder and other crimes, he killed himself in 2013 while awaiting trial.

Wade Michael Page. White supremacist Wade Page opened fire at a Sikh temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, on August 5, 2012, killing six people and wounding four others, including a police officer responding to the shootings. Page killed himself at the scene after being shot by police.

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

References

Anonymous. (2000a, May). Advice for the lone wolf. *White Aryan Resistance Magazine*, p. 5.

Anonymous. (2000b, June). Everyone a leader. *White Aryan Resistance Magazine*, p. 7.

Anti-Defamation League. (2000). *Alex Curtis: "Lone Wolf" of hate prowls the Internet*. New York, NY: Author. Retrieved from http://www.adl.org/assets/pdf/combating-hate/Alex-Curtis-Report.pdf

Anti-Defamation League. (2013). *Inspire Magazine: A staple of domestic terror*. New York, NY: Author. Retrieved from http://blog.adl.org/extremism/inspire-magazine-a-staple-of-domestic-terror

Associated Press. (2012). *Germany: Loner terrorists are greatest threat*. Retrieved from http://www.foxnews.com/world/2012/04/27/germany-loner-terrorists-are-greatest-threat/

Bakker, E., & de Graaf, B. (2010). *Lone wolves: How to prevent this seemingly new phenomenon* (Expert Meeting Paper). The Hague, Netherlands: International Centre for Counter-Terrorism. Retrieved from http://www.icct.nl/download/file/ICCT-Bakker-deGraaf-EM-Paper-Lone-Wolves.pdf

Barnes, B. (2012). Confronting the one-man wolf pack: Adapting law enforcement and prosecution responses to the threat of lone wolf terrorism. *Boston University Law Review*, *92*, 1613-1662. Retrieved from http://www.bu.edu/law/central/jd/organizations/journals/bulr/volume92n4/documents/BARNES.pdf

Barnetson, D. (1986, October 2). Gandhi escapes assassination attempt. *United Press International*.

Bates, R. (2012). Dancing with wolves: Today's lone wolf terrorists. *Journal of Public and Professional Sociology*, *4*, 1-14. Retrieved from http://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/jpps/vol4/iss1/1

Beam, L. (1983). Leaderless resistance. *Inter-Klan Newsletter & Survival Alert*. Retrieved from http://simson.net/ref/leaderless/1983.inter-klan_newsletter.pdf

Beam, L. (1996). Leaderless resistance, 1992 "Final" Edition. Reprinted in *Taking Aim (Militia of Montana Newsletter)*, *3*(5), 3-6.

Becker, R. (1999). Demythology. *THULE*, *3*(3), 29.

CNN. (2011, August 16). *Transcript of interview of President Barack Obama by CNN anchor Wolf Blitzer*. Retrieved from http://cnnpressroom.blogs.cnn.com/2011/08/16/pres-obama-ultimately-the-buck-stops-with-me-im-going-to-be-accountable/?iref=allsearch

Crossfire. (1991, February 4). *Transcript of Cable News Network show Crossfire*.

Curtis, A. (1999a, July). Aryan Kamikaze terrorizes Midwest. *The Nationalist Observer*, p. 1.

Curtis, A. (1999b, February 22). *Racist telephone message* (Summary in possession of author).

Dees, M., & Fifer, S. (1993). *Hate on trial: The case against America's most dangerous Neo-Nazi*. New York, NY: Villard Books.

Eby, C. (2012). *The nation that cried lone wolf: A data-driven analysis of individual terrorists in the United States since 9/11* (Unpublished master's thesis). Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA.

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

German, M. (2005, June 5). Behind the lone terrorist, a pack mentality. *Washington Post*. Retrieved from http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/06/04/AR2005060400147.html

Hewitt, C. (2003). *Understanding terrorism in America: From the Klan to al Qaeda*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Hollyoak, E. (2000). The fallacy of leaderless resistance. *Resistance Magazine, Winter*, 14-18.

Horchem, H. (1982). European terrorism: A German perspective. *Terrorism: An International Journal*, *6*, 27-51. doi:10.1080/10576108208435532

Hoskins, R. (1990). *Vigilantes of Christendom: The history of the Phineas Priesthood*. Lynchburg, VA: The Virginia Publishing Company.

Iviansky, Z. (1977). Individual terror: Concept and typology. *Journal of Contemporary History*, *12*, 43-63. doi:10.1177/002200947701200102

Jenkins, M. (2001). Terrorism and beyond: a 21st century perspective. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *24*, 321-327. Retrieved from http://www.scribd.com/doc/30313709/Terrorism-and-Beyond-A-21st-Century-Perspective.

Johnson, S. (1998). *Psychiatric competency report of Dr. Sally C. Johnson*. United States District Court for the Eastern District of California.

Kaplan, J. (Ed.). (2000). *Encyclopedia of white power: A sourcebook on the radical racist right*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.

Lessner, L. (1999, August 17). The writer who inspired suspects in hate crimes. *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

Likar, L. (2011). *Eco-warriors, nihilistic terrorists, and the environment*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.

Magid, A. (2009). The Unabomber revisited: Reexamining the use of mental disorder diagnoses as evidence of the mental condition of criminal defendants. *Indiana Law Journal*, *84*(Suppl.), 1-21. Retrieved from http://ilj.law.indiana.edu/articles/84/84_Magid.pdf.

Marlatt, G. (2012). *Lone wolf terrorism—A brief bibliography*. Homeland Security Digital Library, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA. Retrieved from https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=727224.

Metzger, T. (1999a, November). Recent interview with Tom Metzger. *White Aryan Resistance Magazine*, p. 6.

Metzger, T. (1999b, April). Editorial by Tom Metzger. *White Aryan Resistance Magazine*, p. 2.

Metzger, T. (2000, December). Leaderless resistance—Have it your way. *White Aryan Resistance Magazine*, p. 6.

Metzger, T. (2005, February). Flyer to "Associates" accompanying *White Aryan Resistance Magazine*.

Michael, G. (2012). *Lone wolf terror and the rise of leaderless resistance*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.

Pantucci, R. (2011). *A typology of lone wolves: Preliminary Analysis of lone Islamist terrorists*. London, England: International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence. Retrieved from http://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/1302002992ICSRPaper_ATypologyofLoneWolves_Pantucci.pdf

Pedahzur, A., & Perliger, A. (2009). *Jewish terrorism in Israel*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Pierce, W. (writing as Andrew Macdonald). (1989). *Hunter*. Hillsboro, WV: National Vanguard Books.

Pitcavage, M. (2000). *Strange territory: Ideology and competency in the courtroom*. Tallahassee, FL: Institute for Intergovernmental Research.

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016

Pitcavage, M. (2009). *Richard Poplawski: The making of a lone wolf*. New York, NY: Anti-Defamation League. Retrieved from http://archive.adl.org/learn/extremism_in_the_news/White_Supremacy/poplawski%20report.htm

Pitcavage, M. (2010). *Joseph Stack and the lone wolf mentality*. New York, NY: Anti-Defamation League. Retrieved from http://archive.adl.org/Learn/ADL_and_Law/Joseph_Stack_and_the_Lone_Wolf_Mentality.asp

Racial Reader Summary. (1999a). *Nationalist Observer Racial Reader's Forum List Summary, July 28-August 3, 1999* (Copy in possession of author).

Racial Reader Summary. (1999b). *Nationalist Observer Racial Reader's Forum List Summary, May 1-7, 1999* (Copy in possession of author).

Racial Reader Summary. (1999c). *Nationalist Observer Racial Reader's Forum List Summary, September 9-15, 1999* (Copy in possession of author).

Robb, A. (2010). Not a lone wolf. *Ms. Magazine*, Spring 2010. Retrieved from http://www.msmagazine.com/spring2010/lonewolf.asp.

Roddy, D. B. (2001, April 27). History of mental illness and racist politics weigh on Baumhammer's murder trial. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. Retrieved from http://old.post-gazette.com/regionstate/20010427baumhammers2.asp

Rubenstein, R. (1987). *Alchemists of revolution: Terrorism in the modern world*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Simi, P. (2010). What is lone wolf terrorism? A research note. In A. J. Bringuel (Ed.). *Terrorism Research and Analysis Project (TRAP): A collection of research ideas, thoughts, and perspectives, Volume I* (pp. 311-340). Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.

Simon, J. D. (2013). *Lone wolf terrorism: Understanding the growing threat*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books.

Spaaij, R. (2010). The enigma of lone wolf terrorism: An assessment. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, *33*, 854-870. doi:10.1080/1057610X.2010.501426.

Spaaij, R. (2012). *Understanding lone wolf terrorism: Global patterns, motivations and prevention*. New York, NY: Springer.

Suro, R. (1998, July 22). Terrorism's new profile: The lone wolf. *Washington Post*.

Thompson, N. (2013). *"Armies of one": Are lone wolf attacks the future of terrorism?* Cable News Network. http://www.cnn.com/2013/05/23/world/europe/london-attack-lone-wolf-fears/

Turchie, T., & Puckett, K. (2007). *Hunting the American terrorist: The FBI's war on homegrown terror*. Palisades, NY: History Publishing Company.

Turner, H. (2006, March 26). Posting to Hal Turner Show website.

Vollers, M. (2007). *Lone wolf: Eric Rudolph and the legacy of American terror*. New York, NY: Harper Perennial.

Ya'ari, E. (1993, April 8). Scuds and knives. *The Jerusalem Report*.

Author Biography

Mark Pitcavage is Director of Investigative Research for the Anti-Defamation League and Director of its Center on Extremism. Prior to joining ADL, he served as Research Director for the Justice Department's State and Local Anti-Terrorism Training Program. He received his PhD in history at The Ohio State University in 1995.

Downloaded from abs.sagepub.com at PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIV on May 10, 2016